



**PLANNING FOR CHANGE:
CONNECTING THEORY WITH ACTION**

**A Conversation with the Cattaraugus-Allegany Principals' Association
February 2, 2011**

Facilitated by Angela Stockman

WNY Education Associates
stockmanangela@gmail.com
<http://www.angelastockman.com>
716-418-3730

TODAY:

You're invited to share your own experiences as an agent of change, reflect on the challenges you've faced along the way, and use what is learned from our learning and conversation to determine what your next actions will be.

WE WILL ACCOMPLISH THIS IN A VARIETY OF WAYS:

- By drafting and sharing personal (and very informal) case studies
- By reflecting on what these studies reveal about our successes and challenges
- By exploring a variety of texts relevant to theories of change and mining the expertise of those that are in our company today
- By identifying how we might apply what is discovered
- By defining our next steps, sharing them, and connecting with those who might provide further support

THINKING ABOUT CHANGE:

Take a moment to explore the quotes that are scattered about the room.

Pick up one or more that resonates with you or speaks to your experiences as an agent of change inside of schools.

In a moment, you will share at least one of these quotes as you introduce yourself.

DRAFTING YOUR CASE STUDY

Please use the template provided to capture the most important details about a change that you are striving to provoke, lead, or manage within your building or district.

Create an *INTRIGUING* Title for Your Case Study:

Provide a Bit of Background:

- What is motivating the change?
- Who will this change serve and how?
- What theories, processes, or practices are you or others considering as you plan for change?
- When did your efforts to lead change begin?
- How will you know if you've been a successful change agent?

What indications of success have you observed so far?

What challenges are you facing?

What ONE problem would you like to explore potential solutions for today? Please write this on the Post It below.

ENGAGING IN A TEXT-BASED DIALOGUE

Ideally, the members of your study group are compelled by similar problems in their efforts to facilitate change. The protocol below can guide a rich conversation about potential solutions posed by Michael Fullan in his article, ***Change Theory: A force for school improvement.***

If you have not had the opportunity to read this piece yet and would prefer to use the time provided to do so, please feel free to remove yourself from your group.

1. Before you begin, please take 10 minutes to review the article and compose responses to the following questions:

Where do you agree with Fullan?

What would you challenge or question?

Which practices, processes, or perspectives do you aspire to?

2. Please discuss each question in rounds, beginning with the first: *Where do you agree with Fullan?*

After each group member has shared their thoughts about this first question, then proceed to discuss the second question in one full round before speaking to the third.

3. End the discussion with an open dialogue framed around these questions:

How are Fullan's findings and our own reflections relevant to our work as change agents?

How can we use what we've learned to create potential solutions for the problems we face?

DETERMINING POTENTIAL INTERVENTIONS

RESTATE THE PROBLEM YOU IDENTIFIED HERE (OR ADD YOUR POST IT TO THIS COLUMN)	WHAT ARE YOUR HUNCHES ABOUT THE CAUSE OF THIS PROBLEM, GIVEN WHAT YOU'VE LEARNED TODAY?	BASED ON THE PREMISES, PRACTICES, AND PROCESSES YOU'VE EXPLORED TODAY, WHAT ACTIONS WILL YOU NEED TO TAKE IN ORDER TO CREATE OR INSPIRE A RESOLUTION?

PEER REVIEW

What is peer review?

The peer review process is an opportunity to share our work with others and allow them to provide feedback and ask questions that will help us make improvements.

How does it work?

You will spend 15 minutes in peer review for each group member. During this time, you will follow these steps:

1. Each member of your group is a leader of change. **The first leader who would like to receive peer review will share his or her case study with you**, as well as the intervention that was identified on the previous page.

2. **You will listen as the case study and the intervention plan are read.** Then, you will take a few minutes to plan your feedback/response using the guidelines that follow.

3. **You will provide WARM FEEDBACK first.** You may only share one thought at a time, so that everyone has a chance to speak. Please speak in rounds until this conversation is exhausted. When you run out of things to say simply “pass.”

You may not give praise or any sort of compliment to the speaker during peer review. You may do so afterward, though!

Determine what is effective about the approach, using what you’ve learned about leading change today and evidence from the plan provided.

4. **After everyone has shared their warm feedback with the writer, begin to share COOL FEEDBACK.**

You may not make statements about mistakes, errors, or weaknesses.

Instead, ask the leader under review to consider different points about the plan that may help him or her to improve it. Ask questions that enable the leader to discover potential points of revision and solutions independently.

As the leader under review, please remain silent while others are providing feedback to you. Interrupting the process to explain, defend, correct or provide added details consumes a lot of time and will prevent you from listening actively.

Use the space provided on the next page to capture what you hear and notice. Afterward, you can decide which feedback was most relevant and helpful and how/if you will respond.

PEER REVIEW NOTES:

WARM FEEDBACK PROVIDED TO ME:	COOL FEEDBACK PROVIDED TO ME:

**THIS IS HOW I MAY REVISE MY APPROACH IN RESPONSE TO WHAT
I'VE LEARNED FROM PEER REVIEW:**

ACTIONS TO TAKE IMMEDIATELY:

**ACTIONS REQUIRING ADDITIONAL
TIME OR PLANNING:**

REFERENCES

(Numbers Align to the Quotes Selected During Today's Warm Up)

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QUOTES

“If a stimulus is associated with positive emotions or rewards, it will likely lead to an approach response; if it is associated with negative emotions or punishments, it will likely lead to an avoid response.” 1

“Someone feeling threatened by a boss who is undermining their credibility is less likely to be able to solve complex problems and more likely to make mistakes.” 1

“The perception of a potential or real reduction in status can generate a strong threat response. Eisenberger and colleagues showed that a reduction in status resulting from being left out of an activity lit up the same regions of the brain as physical pain.” 1

“Many everyday conversations devolve into arguments driven by a status threat, a desire to not be perceived as less than another. When threatened, people may defend a position that doesn’t make sense, to avoid the perceived pain of a drop in status.”1

“People feel a status increase when they feel they are learning and improving and when attention is paid to this improvement.” 1

“Much of the field of change management is devoted to increasing a sense of certainty where little certainty exists.” 1

“Simply improving a process will not be enough to win over everyone.” 2

“Velocity strips knowledge and information down to its bare essentials by removing portions of its context and richness, however it does allow it to move much faster. And this stripping effect often takes the message down to the next level for its intended receivers — from knowledge to information or from information to data. Thus, the intended knowledge exchange often fails.” 2

“One of the best knowledge-enablers for a beginning learner is apprenticeship as it allows a rich exchange of concepts and ideas between the learner and teacher.” 2

“Velocity — the speed with which knowledge moves through an organization.

Viscosity — the richness or thickness of the knowledge transferred.” 3

“Change theory or change knowledge can be very powerful in informing education reform strategies and, in turn, getting results---but only in the hands (and minds, and hearts) of people who have deep knowledge of the dynamics of how the factors in question operate to get particular results.” 3

“Having a “theory in use” is not good enough, of itself. The people involved must also push to the next level, to make their theory of action explicit.” 3

“If teachers are going to help students to develop the skills and competencies of knowledge-creation, teachers need experience themselves in building professional knowledge.” 3

“Instructional goals were more often articulated in terms of student outcomes or achievement levels rather than in terms of instructional quality, that is, what the schools do to help students achieve.” 3

“At the school level, finding teachers who understood the implications of standards for their teaching was difficult.” 3

“The theory of action underpinning PLCs is not deeply enough specified by those adopting PLCs. They will again fall short of getting results.” 3

“Terms travel faster and better than concepts.” 3

“PLCs can be miscast as changing the cultures of *individual schools* rather than their deeper meaning PLCs need to be part and parcel of creating new multiple *district cultures*.” 3

“Motivation cannot be achieved in the short run. In fact, the beginning of ALL eventual success is unavoidably bumpy.” 3

“Cultures do not change by mandate; they change by the specific displacement of existing norms, structures, and processes by others; the process of cultural change depends fundamentally on modeling the new values and behavior that you expect to displace the existing one.” 3

“If you want to change systems, you need to increase the amount of purposeful interaction between and among individuals within and across the tri-levels, and indeed within and across systems.” 4

“The attraction of charismatic leaders is that they promise a solution to all of our problems if only we follow the leaders with unwavering certitude.....For all its manifest defects, charismatic authority has always been alluring for the single reason that it avoids accountability and responsibility for outcomes.” 4

“The main mark of an effective principal is not just his or her impact on the bottom line of student achievement, but also on how many leaders he or she leaves behind who can go even further.” 4

“It is very hard to lead on behalf of other people’s changes in their underlying ways of making meaning without considering the possibility that we ourselves must also change.” 4

When networks proliferate, ideas reign but coherence does not. When networks are embraced as a strategy, it’s easy to think that you are pursuing complexity as you end up with clutter.” 4

“Networks do not have the line-authority for taking good ideas and creating the intense learning process that we know is essential for sustained implementation.” 4

“The new work of developmental leaders involves inviting the people with the problems to be the solution shapers.” 4

“Skillful and balanced management of energy is the key to sustainability. Overuse is burnout; underuse is atrophy.” 4

“Any form of stress that prompts discomfort has the potential to expand our capacity—physically, mentally, emotionally, or spiritually.” 4

“The key to sustainability is not an all-out marathon, but rather cyclical energizing. To do this, leaders need to seek sources and situations that push the limits of their energy and engagement, coupled with rituals or periodic breaks that are energy recovering.” 4

“Leaders are the stewards of organizational energy....They inspire or demoralize others first by how effectively they manage their own energy and next by how well they mobilize, focus, invest, and renew the collective energy of those they lead.” 4

“For the classroom teacher on the receiving end of change, this combination of centralized frameworks and initiatives with decentralized responsibility seemed bewilderingly contradictory. Portfolio assessments were paralleled by standardized tests. Interdisciplinary initiatives ran alongside subject-based report cards.” 5

“If a succinct way can be found to explain what a system does well, it is easier for others to learn and apply the core principles behind it in their own way. In this sense, we can avoid transplanting isolated elements—such as Finnish teachers’ masters’ degrees or high numbers of annual instruction in Japan—as simple solutions for educational success.” 5

“Technocrats value what they measure instead of measuring what they value. They narrow the curriculum, prioritize the tested basics, and turn a blind eye to teaching to the test.” 5

“Parents who respectfully handed their children over to teachers who were left to go on with the job was replaced by an active mistrust between parents and teachers.” 5

“The answer to outcomes and standards lies not in how they are written and imposed, but in how communities of teachers make sense of them together in relation to the particular students they teach.” 5

“Always remember: without students, there would be no teachers. Their voices matter a lot.” 5

“It is time to rediscover, reconnect with, and revivify the heart and soul of what teaching is about—what brings the best people into this great calling and then keeps them there, despite everything.” 5

“Resilient teachers are able to synthesize and streamline standards so they suit their own curriculum purposes.” 5

“We must create ideas that are both simple and profound.” 6

“We can engage people’s curiosity over a long period of time by systematically “opening gaps” in their knowledge—and then filling those gaps.” 6

“It’s hard to make ideas stick in a noisy, unpredictable, chaotic environment. If we’re to succeed, the first step is this: Be simple. Not simple in terms of “dumbing down” or “sound bites.” You don’t have to speak in monosyllables to be simple. What we mean by “simple” is finding the core of the idea.” 6

“Why is prioritizing so hard? In the abstract, it doesn’t sound so tough. You prioritize important goals over less important goals. You prioritize goals that are “critical” over those that are “beneficial.” But what if we can’t tell what’s “critical” and what’s “beneficial”?....This kind of complexity can be paralyzing.” 6

“Our tendency is to tell people the facts. First though, they must realize that they need these facts. The trick to convincing people they need our message, according to Loewenstein, is to first highlight some specific knowledge they are missing.” 6

“The gap theory relies on our ability to point out things that people don’t know. One complication is that people tend to think they know a lot. Research has shown that we are typically overconfident about how much we know.” 6

“They were suffering from the Curse of Knowledge. They had lost the ability to tell what it was like to approach something from the perspective of a nonexpert.” 6

“What matters to people? People matter to themselves. It will come as no surprise that one reliable way of making people care is by invoking self-interest.” 6

“What looks like a people problem is often a situation problem.” 7

“To change someone’s behavior, you have to change that person’s situation.” 7

“Often, the heart and the mind disagree. Fervently.” 7

“As we face more and more options, we become overloaded. Choice no longer liberates, it debilitates. It might even be said to tyrannize.” 7

“Ambiguity is the enemy. Any successful change requires a translation of ambiguous goals into concrete behaviors. In short, to make a switch, you need to script the critical moves.” 7

“In highly successful change efforts, people find ways to help others see the problems or solutions in ways that influence emotions, not just thought.” 7

“Once people are on the path and making progress, it’s important to make their advances visible.” 7

“A new identity can take route quickly, but living up to it is awful hard.” 7

“When change happens, it tends to follow a pattern. We’ve got to stop ignoring the pattern and start embracing it.” 7

“We can ignore the information, dismiss it as irrelevant, blame the undesired outcome on others or fate, or as is most common, simply deny its validity.” 8

“If we admit to ourselves and others that something is wrong or imperfect, we will lose our effectiveness, our self-esteem, and maybe even our identity.” 8

“What most change agents have learned from their own experience is that ‘diagnostic’ activities such as observations, interviews, and questionnaires are powerful interventions and the process of learning about the system and changing the system are, in fact, one and the same.” 8

“Too many researchers and consultants assume that they can ‘objectively’ gather data and arrive at a diagnosis without having already changed the system. In fact, the very method of gathering data influences the system and therefore, must be considered carefully.” 8

“The interview process itself will change the system and the nature of that change will provide some of the most important data about how the system works, i.e. will respondents be paranoid and mistrusting, open and helpful, supportive of each other or hostile in their comments about each other, cooperative or aloof, and so on. The best information about the dynamics of an organization will be how the organization deals with the consultant, because his or her very presence is de facto intervention.” 8

“It is this dynamic—our reliance on identification with a role model—that explains why so many consultant processes go awry. The consultant, by design or unwittingly, becomes a role model and generates solutions that do not really fit the culture of the organization, and therefore, are only adopted temporarily.” 8

“Effective change agents assume that the best and most stable solution will be one that the learner has invented for him or herself.” 8

“We need to redefine teamwork as the coordination of individual activities for pragmatic ends, not the subordination of the individual to the group.” 8

“We must begin to think in terms of how our own actions might be contributing to our reality.” 9

“Today’s problems come from yesterday’s solutions.” 9

“Organizations will not have visions until individuals have visions.” 9

“Don’t push growth; remove the factors preventing growth.” 9

“Aggressive action often produces exactly the opposite of what is intended. It produces instability and oscillation instead of moving you more quickly toward your goal.” 9

“We must seek divergent views before developing a convergent conclusion.” 9

“Be collaborative inquirers, not forceful advocates.” 9

“Discussion is like a ping-pong game—back and forth until someone wins. By contrast, dialogue involves a free flow of meaning between people until all win. That is, until a pool of common meaning is achieved.”9

“There are three necessary conditions for dialogue:

1. All participants must suspend their assumptions
2. All participants must regard one another as colleagues
3. There must be a facilitator who holds the context.” 9

“Thomas Friedman has been quoted as saying, ‘When I was young, my parents told me, finish your dinner. People in China and India are starving. I tell my daughters, finish your homework. People in India and China are starving for your job.’” 10

“The fallacy seems obvious here. If American education has been at risk for more than 25 years—some say 40 years—and continues to deteriorate, and if education is said to determine a nation’s and its citizens’ success, how can we explain the fact that America continues to be competitive?” 10

“In the lack of standards and evaluation we see one of the great values of American culture expressed in education: the value of individuals.” 10

“How does talent diversity work in relation to a country’s prosperity? First, different talents complement each other.....Second, talent diversity breeds innovation and encourages innovators...Third, talent diversity prepares society for change.” 10

“We thus face a choice of what we want: a diversity of talents, of individuals who are passionate, curious, self-confident, and risk taking; or a nation of excellent test takers, excellent performers on math and reading tests.” 10

“The creativity gap between Americans and the Chinese exists not because American schools teach creativity more or better than our Chinese counterparts. They just don’t thwart creativity as much as the Chinese do.” 10

“Globalization has consequences.” 10

“What is needed to help our children adopt a global view in their thinking and develop a sense of global citizenship?” 10

“The virtual world can be viewed as a foreign culture that we must interact with.” 10

